CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Advisory

Contact:

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What: Media Availability – DWR and Jet Propulsion Laboratory/NASA Aerial Snow Survey

When: Thursday, May 2, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
[will be conducted immediately following DWR's manual snow survey at Phillips Station at 8:30 a.m. Please note earlier start time from previous snow surveys. Press release will be distributed in coming days.]

Where: South Lake Tahoe Airport
[airport located approx. 10 miles east of Phillips Station on Hwy. 50]

Provided during event:

Interviews:
Frank Gehrke, DWR's Chief of Snow Surveys
Tom Painter, JPL/NASA scientist, principal Airborne Snow Observatory (ASO) investigator
Bruce McGurk, ASO researcher and former Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Manager

Video/still opportunity:
Aerial snow survey plane on tarmac (Twin Otter)
onboard technology, accompanying crew
take-off/ landing of one survey flight

B-roll and stills provided:
On-board/midair operations by Gehrke, Painter and crew during a recent survey flight
Processed computer imaging from data gathered during recent survey flight

During the month of April, following the driest January-March period on record for portions of California, DWR has taken to the sky to conduct aerial snow surveys of the Sierra Nevada snowpack. The Airborne Snow Observatory Program is a pilot project and partnership between DWR and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory Airborne Snow Observatory. The aerial surveys, which have begun with the Tuolumne River Basin, are conducted aboard a Twin Otter plane equipped for Lidar technology measuring the snowpack's depth and for conducting spectrometer readings to gauge the snowpack's reflectivity. This additional information, when combined with data from the traditional manual snow surveys and electronic sensors, can provide a better estimate of California's water supply.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.